

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 IO-11 ARA-06 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 EB-07 OMB-01 TRSE-00 /091 W

----- 041737

R 170208Z MAR 76

FM AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

TO SEFSTATE WASHDC 2775

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

USMISSION UN NEW YORK

CINCPAC

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CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: PGOV, PFOR, PINS, PINT, MY

SUBJ: POLITICAL NOTES: 1) ONLY BERJAYA MINISTER QUILTS PARTY, 2) BERJAYA
YA

OFFICIAL ARRESTED, 3) DEPUTY INFORMATION MINISTER DIES, 4) MORE
PROBLEMS FOR HARUN, 5) CUBANS COME CALLING

REF: (A) KUALA LUMPUR 1341 (DTG 100902Z MAR 76) NOTAL,

(B) KUALA LUMPUR 1405 (DTG 120951Z MAR 76) NOTAL

2. SUMMARY. THIS MESSAGE TRANSMITS POLITICAL NOTES ON THE
FOLLOWING SUBJECTS: 1) ONLY BERJAYA MINISTER QUILTS PARTY,
2) BERJAYA OFFICIAL ARRESTED, 3) DEPUTY INFORMATION MINISTER
DIES, 4) MORE PROBLEMS FOR HARUN, 5) CUBANS COME CALLING.
END SUMMARY.

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2. GHANI GILONG QUILTS BERJAYA. WORKS AND UTILITIES MINISTER

DATUK HAJI ABDUL GHANI GILONG ON MAR 15 ANNOUNCED HIS RESIGNATION FROM SABAH-BASED BERJAYA PARTY OF WHICH HE WAS A FOUNDER AND VICE PRESIDENT. HE SAID HIS DECISION WAS MADE "IN THE INTEREST OF THE COUNTRY AND BUMIPUTRA UNITY" IN SABAH, CONTENDING THAT BERJAYA FOUNDED LAST JUL, HAD DEVIATED FROM IT ORIGINAL OBJECTIVE OF UNITING SABAHANS. BERJAYA PRESIDENT TUN HAJI MOHAMED FAUD EXPRESSED "COMPLETE SURPRISE" AT GHANI GILONG'S MOVE. (COMMENT: THIS IS LATEST BLOW TO FORTUNES OF BERJAYA, WHICH IRONICALLY MEANS "SUCCESS IN MALAY--CREATED LAST YEAR BY DEFECTORS FROM USNO TO OPPOSE AUTHORITARIAN RULE BY THEN CHIEF MINISTER TUN MUSTAPHA, AND COMES WHEN PARTY IS FIGHTING UPHILL BATTLE FOR STATE ASSEMBLY SEATS IN SABAH ELECTIONS SCHEDULED TO BEGIN APR 5 AND CONTINUE ON STAGGERED BASIS OVER A TEN DAY PERIOD. GHANI GILONG IS A FORMER VICE PRESIDENT OF USNO BUT HE HAS NOT INDICATED WHETHER HE WOULD BE RETURNING TO USNO FOLD. IT ALSO IS NOT CLEAR WHAT EFFECT, IF ANY, RESIGNATION WILL HAVE ON GHANI GILONG'S CABINET STATUS, AND HOW THIS FITS INTO THE OVERALL BERJAYA-USNO/MUSTAPHA-FEDERAL GOVERNEMENT EQUATION).

3. BERJAYA OFFICIAL ARRESTED. FURTHER TO REF A, WE HAVE JUST LEARNED THAT BERJAYA SECRETARY GENERAL HAJI MOHAMMAD NOOR BIN HAJI MANSOR WAS ARRESTED UNDER INTERNAL SECURITY ACT(ISA) AT HIS RESIDENCE IN KOTA KINABALU, SABAH, BY POLICE SPECIAL BRANCH OFFICERS THIS MORNING (MAR 16). NO ADDITIONAL DETAILS OR REASONS FOR THE ARREST WERE GIVEN, ALTHOUGH DATUK DZULKIFLI, ACTING SECRETARY GENERAL OF TUN MUSTAPHA'S SABAH ALLIANCE COALITION, ACCUSED HIM MAR 2 OF MATERMINDING A PHILIPPINE-LINKED ASSASSINATION PLOT AGAINST MUSTAPHA.

4. DEATH OF DEPUTY INFORMATION MINISTER. DEPUTY INFORMATION MINISTER DATUK WAN ABDUL KADIR BIN ISMAIL, 47, DIED AT KUALA LUMPUR GENERAL HOSPITAL MAR 15 SHORTLY AFTER BEING STRICKEN BY "SEVERE HEART ATTACK." WAN KADIR WAS AN UMNO MP FROM TRENGGANU STATE AND UNTIL NAMED TO INFORMATION POST MAR 5 HAD SERVED AS DEPUTY MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS. HE WAS PROMINENT IN ACTIVITIES OF VARIOUS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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MIDDLE EAST ORIENTED ORGANIZATIONS, HIS MIDEAST INTEREST STEMMING FROM HIS STUDIES IN CAIRO AT AL AZHAR AND THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY.

5. HARUN'S PROBLEMS. AS REPORTED REF B, SELANGOR CHIEF MINISTER/UMNO YOUTH CHIEF DATUK HARUN BIN IDRIS WAS CHARGED MAR 12 WITH FORGERY AND CRIMINAL BREACH OF TRUST REGARDING 8 MILLION RINGGIT SHARES AND STOCKS BELONGING TO PEOPLE'S

COOPERATIVE BANK. HE AND BANK GENERAL MANAGER ISMAIL BIN DIN, ALSO CHARGED ON SAME COUNTS, WERE RELEASED ON 100,000 RINGGIT BAIL EACH. NEW CHARGES ADD TO WOES OF HARUN, WHO NOW FACES BROADENING ARRAY OF CURRUPTION CHARGES AND CURRENTLY IS ON "LEAVE" (CLEARLY AT BIDDING OF AUTHORITIES) FROM CHIEF MINISTER POST, OSTENSIBLY TO PREPARE DEFENSE. BRIGHT SPOT FOR HIM CAME OVER WEEKEND WHEN WHAT MAR 15 "NEW STRAITS TIMES" (NST) DESCRIBED AS "BIG WELCOME BY SEVERAL THOUSANDS" GREETED HIS ATTENDANCE AT MAR 14 UMNO YOUTH RALLY IN K.L. NST REPORTED THAT UMNO STALWART (AND REPUTED MALAY CHAUVINIST) TAN SRI SYED JAAFAR ALBAR IN ADDRESS TO RALLY ALLEGED THAT SEVERAL COMMUNIST AGENTS HAD PENETRATED THE GOM AND CONTENDED THAT THE MALAYSIAN PRESS WAS CONTROLLED BY SEVERAL "CLIQUES." (JAAFAR ALBAR LATER DENIED HE HAD SAID THERE ARE COMMUNISTS IN GOM.) JAAFAR ALBAR ALSO EXPRESSED HOPE THAT "DATUK HARUN AFTER THIS CRUCIAL TEST WILL BECOME A GREAT LEADER." CHINESE PRESS REPORTED THAT UMNO YOUTH PASSED RESOLUTION AT RALLY CALLING FOR "IMMEDIATE RESTORATION" OF HARUN AS CHIEF MINISTER AND IMMEDIATELY THEREAFTER PROCEEDED TO SULTAN OF SELANGOR'S PALACE TO PRESS THEIR APPEAL. ALTHOUGH NO DISTRUBANCES WERE REPORTED, POLICE MOUNTED EXTRA PATROLS OVER WEEKEND AND ACCORDING TO ONE INFORMANT, POLICE SPECIAL BRANCH ADVISED SOME KNOWN UMNO YOUTH ACTIVISTS TO REMAIN AT HOME DURING RALLY.

6. CUBAN OFFICIALS CALL ON FOREIGN MINISTER. ON MAR 11, TWO SENIOR OFFICIALS OF THE CUBAN FOREIGN MINISTRY, JOSE PEREZ HERANDEZ, DIRECTOR OF INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS, AND JOSE GUERRA MANCHERO, DIRECTOR OF THE ASIA DIVISION, CALLED ON FOREIGN MINISTER TENGKU AHMAD RITHAUDDEEN. PRESS ACCOUNTS SAID THAT AMONG THE TOPICS DISCUSSED WAS THE UPCOMING NON-ALIGNED SUMMIT IN COLOMBO. LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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RITHAUDDEEN DID NOT ELABORATE IN PUBLIC ON THE CALL, SAYING ONLY THAT "WE ALSO DISCUSSED INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS AND MATTERS BENEFICIAL TO BOTH CUBA AND MALAYSIA AND TO NON-ALIGNED NATIONS." (COMMENT: GIVEN CUBA'S PARTICULAR INTERESTS IN BOTH THE NON-ALIGNED MEETING AND IN THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY, WE ASSUME THAT THE CUBAN DELEGATION WAS SEEKING GOM SUPPORT FOR CUBAN POSITIONS ON THE PUERTO RICAN AND OTHER QUESTIONS. PREVIOUS TO THIS VISIT CUBA'S FIRST AMBASSADOR ACCREDITED TO MALAYSIA, MARIO GARCIA INCHAUSTEGUI, BASED IN TOKYO, PRESENTED HIS CREDENTIALS HERE JAN 17, AT WHICH TIME HE SAID HE PLANNED TO VISIT MALAYSIA SEVERAL TIMES EACH YEAR. SINCE HE IS IDENTIFIED AS FORMER CUBAN PERMREP AT THE UN WE ALSO ASSUME HE PERSONALLY WILL PLAY AN ACTIVE ROLE IN DRUMMING UP SUPPORT FOR CUBAN POSITIONS AT THE UNGA

AND OTHER INTERATIONAL CONFERENCES).
UNDERHILL

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